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World crime trends and emerging issues and responses in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice

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Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present document, prepared in accordance with the practice established pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/18, presents the most recent information available to the Secretary-General on world crime trends and the state of criminal justice.

The present document reviews trends in crime and criminal justice — in particular, related to homicide, trafficking in persons and wildlife crime — that are related to targets contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which the General Assembly adopted in its resolution 70/1. Data on those crimes can be used to monitor differences between regions and changes in the global situation over time, because they are all part of the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, in order to highlight the importance of the disaggregation of data, gender aspects of crime are presented using examples from homicide and trafficking in persons.

In some cases, data on criminal justice could also be used to monitor developments related to the Sustainable Development Goals. Target 16.3 of the Goals, for example, calls for countries to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. In criminal matters, access to justice may be denied at an early stage if victims of crime do not report the experience to authorities. The present document highlights trends in the reporting of crime to authorities by victims as an indicator for access to justice. Another indicator for access to justice and rule of law addressed in the present note is the treatment of persons suspected of crime by the criminal justice system. The number and percentage of persons held in prison without sentence can provide an indicator of access to justice as well as fairness and efficiency of the criminal justice system.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 70/1, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which contains a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets. The Agenda entails a broadening of the international community's conceptualization of development. The eight Millennium Development Goals focused primarily on tackling immediate health-related issues such as extreme poverty, child mortality, maternal health and malaria. In contrast, the Sustainable Development Goals cover a significantly broader set of policy areas.

2. The wide scope of the Sustainable Development Goals clearly acknowledges the impact that crime and criminal justice can have on development. Fostering broad-based sustainable development projects in unsafe surroundings where many inhabitants live in fear of violence or exploitation is a challenging undertaking, which is reflected in several areas of the 2030 Agenda, including Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels). In addition, many of the targets associated with different Goals address issues related to crime, justice and safety.

3. Progress towards the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals and the related targets can be monitored using data on crime trends contained in the global indicator framework, developed as a tool to monitor that progress. Examples include indicators 16.1.1 (Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age) and 16.2.2 (Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation). The present document focuses on trends in homicide, trafficking in persons and wildlife crime, and on trends relating to access to justice. Data on those crimes can be used to monitor regional differences and changes in the global situation over time, as they are all part of the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. The global indicator framework puts a strong emphasis on the disaggregation of data. Different indicators call for different approaches to disaggregation, although sex and age are applicable in most contexts. A key aspiration of the Sustainable Development Goals is to "leave no one behind". Disaggregated data can help pinpoint areas of progress and situations ripe for intervention and is therefore a key tool in enhancing policymaking. Examples of such data regarding homicide and trafficking in persons are presented below and demonstrate how sex disaggregation can identify specific patterns and aspects of those crimes.

II. International crime trends

5. Measuring crime trends has proved to be a complicated task. During the criminal justice process, countries collect administrative data, which are compiled in the statistics of recorded crime. However, the number of detected crimes reveals little about the real number of crimes committed or persons victimized, since some crimes are never discovered or identified. In some instances, victims do not identify themselves as victims of crime, or they do not want or are not able to report the crime to the authorities. Even when they are discovered, not all crimes are reported, and of those crimes reported to the competent authorities, not all are recorded. For those reasons, the number of recorded arrests, convictions and victims are all inadequate for estimating the amount of crime in a society. The use of administrative crime statistics to conduct comparisons by country or time period normally reflects only the levels of crime reporting, the definitions for specific crimes in different countries, and the socioeconomic and political contexts.[1]

[1] See United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), "Compiling and comparing International Crime Statistics", online briefing. Available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/Compiling-and-comparing-International-Crime-Statistics.html.

6. In many countries, victimization surveys have been conducted in order to collect information directly from crime victims. Such an approach is believed to be a more accurate measurement of the true incidence of crime.[2] However, figures based on detected crimes can still be useful in measuring certain aspects of crime and the functioning of the criminal justice system. Therefore, a combination of data from victimization surveys and administrative records help provide the most comprehensive picture of the patterns and incidence of crime.

7. The present document sets forth a crime trend analysis using three global indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, namely homicide, trafficking in persons and wildlife crime. Homicide is one of the most serious violent crimes and as such tends to be recorded by the police more effectively than other crimes. As a result, homicide is probably the most widely reported and recorded crime in criminal justice statistics, which makes it possible to assess homicide trends despite national differences, including in definitions and recording practices.

8. Measuring trafficking in persons is particularly difficult because the crime is largely hidden. While the methodology to estimate the hidden part of human trafficking is in development, data on detected victims around the world can reveal aspects of human trafficking flows and patterns, and provide insight into how the crime is committed.

9. Wildlife trafficking can be illustrated by using seizure data pertaining to wildlife crime. A seizure is made when contraband is detected by the authorities. Each incident can provide multiple pieces of information on the nature of an illicit market and the type of wildlife that was trafficked. From those data, global and regional pictures can be generated.

10. Sex-disaggregated data allow for a better understanding of the ways in which crime affects women and men. Different types of crime, and different forms of the same crime, often victimize women and men differently. In addition, the type of homicide and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator tends to have an impact on victimization. Gang-related homicides and the killing of women by their intimate partners are two such examples.

11. Data related to the Sustainable Development Goal indicators on access to justice are presented in order to demonstrate differences in access to justice, which is one of the fundamental rights in countries operating within the principles of rule of law.

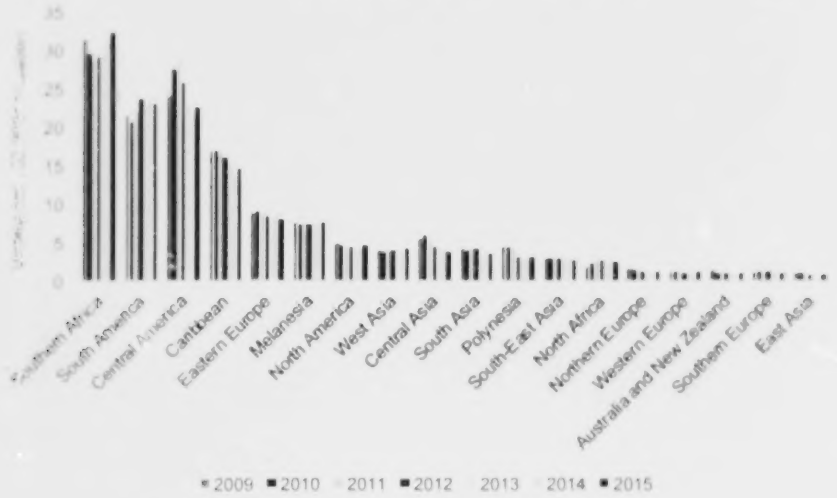
A. Global and regional crime trends

Homicide

12. Target 16.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals requires countries to significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. According to the detected cases of homicide contained in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) homicide database, between 5.2 and 6.7 persons per 100,000 population, were victims of intentional homicide at the global level in 2015 (see figure I). While an overall decline in intentional homicide was observed over the last decade, the incidence of homicidal violence continues to vary greatly from region to region. In general, homicide rates decreased in developed countries overall, remained unchanged in developing countries that had high homicide levels, and increased in the least developed countries for which data were available. Intentional homicide rates decreased in most regions between 2009 and 2015. Large increases were seen only in North Africa between 2009 and 2011, Southern Africa between 2011 and 2015, and in South America from 2009 to 2014. The recent increase seen in Southern Africa must be considered in the context of a remarkable 25-year decline.

[2] See UNODC and Economic Commission for Europe, *Manual on Victimization Surveys* (Geneva, 2010).

Figure 1
Victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population by subregion, 2009–2015

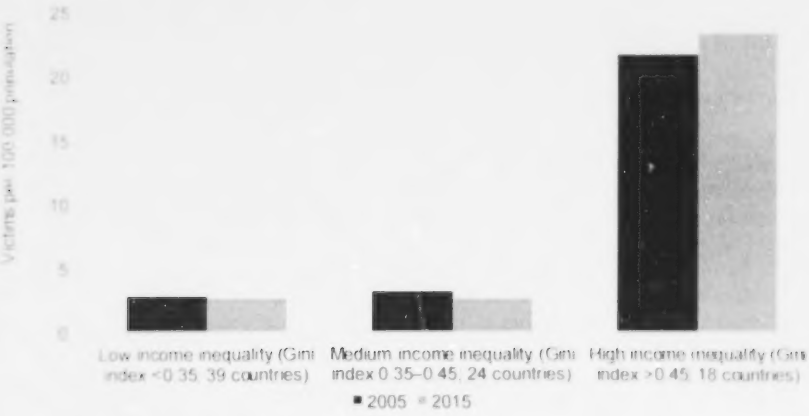


Source: UNODC homicide database.

Note: Based on extrapolations from homicide data covering close to 100 per cent of the population. Regions without complete coverage (West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Micronesia) were excluded from the graph.

13. Cutting across the geographical patterns, a common feature in countries with high homicide rates is income inequality (see figure 2). Since 2005, homicide levels have typically increased in countries with high income inequality. As a result, those countries with the highest Gini index[3] have homicide rates that are an average of nine times greater than countries where income is more evenly distributed.

Figure 2
Victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population by income inequality, 2005 and 2015



Source: UNODC homicide database.

[3] The Gini index is a widely used measure of the distribution of income in a country. A country's income distribution falls on a scale between 0 (total income equally distributed among the total population) and 1 (the point at which only one person would have all national income). The index provides a useful tool for comparing levels of income disparity between countries.

14. It is difficult to show a direct causal linkage between levels of violence and levels of development. However, development is a preventive factor for violence; on the other hand, violence can hinder development. According to a World Bank study, poverty is declining at the global level; however, countries affected by major violence experience an average annual rate of poverty reduction that is nearly one percentage point lower than that seen in countries not affected by violence.[6] After a few years, the result can be significant. Violence can also threaten lives and livelihoods and undermine the rule of law and the foundation of national security.

Trafficking in persons

15. The use of statistics on detected cases as the basis for research on trafficking in persons has some limitations. Human trafficking is hard to measure, since the crime is largely hidden. Conducting data-gathering with tools including household surveys or the multiple systems estimation technique,[7] which estimates the number of victims using methods that measure hard-to-find populations, might reveal to an estimate in line with indicator 16.2.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. At present, however, these sources are not sufficiently developed to allow for the accurate measurement of the problem at the global level.

16. It is not possible to estimate the extent of the phenomenon or to measure its severity from State to State by taking into account the number of detected victims only. However, indicators based on identified victims and criminal justice responses can be useful in that regard. For example, studying the level of conviction rates can help assess the capacity of countries to detect and prosecute cases of human trafficking.

17. Administrative data can be used as a proxy to detect existing trafficking flows or to analyse the characteristics of the victims and the offenders as recorded by national institutions with a view to understanding their profiles (for example, age, sex and citizenship), as well as the forms of trafficking recorded. Triangulating those data with other information, such as analyses of court cases, reviews of the existing literature and field research, can provide a good overview of the current trafficking situation.

18. According to data on cases detected by national authorities reported to UNODC and stored in the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database, trafficking in persons affects most States. During the period 2012–2015, some 50,000 victims of human trafficking from 160 different countries were detected, identified or assisted in 140 countries. More than 570 different trafficking flows[8] could be discerned from those data. Detected trafficking flows have been increasing. During the period 2007–2010, 460 flows were detected; during the period 2010–2012, that number was 510.

19. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, information on detected victims can facilitate understanding of the victim profile and inform progress on targets 16.2 (End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children), 5.2 (Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation) and 8.7 (Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and

[6] See World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development* (Washington, D.C., 2011). The calculations are based on Chen Shaohua and Martin Ravallion, 2004 poverty data (available on POVCALNET (http://iresearch.worldbank.org)).

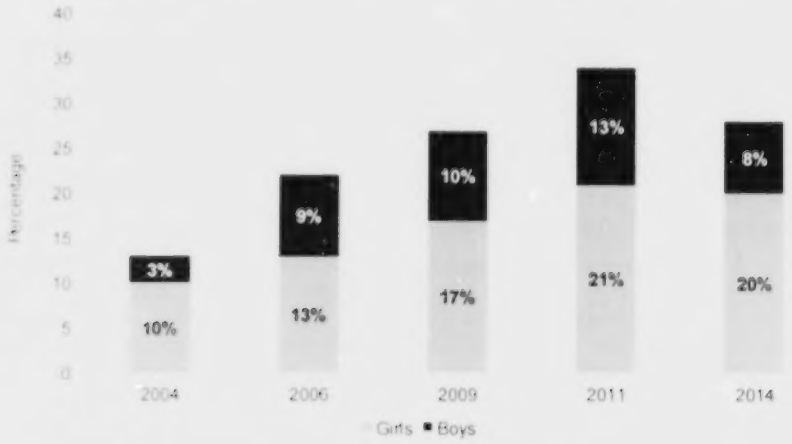
[7] See UNODC and Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children, "Measuring target 16.2 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: a multiple systems estimation of the numbers of presumed human trafficking victims in the Netherlands in 2010–2015 by year, age, gender, form of exploitation, and nationality", Research Brief (2017).

[8] The term "trafficking flow" here means one origin country and one destination country with at least five detected victims in the period 2012–2014. That also includes domestic trafficking, in which the country of origin and destination are the same.

elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms1. Trends in the data on trafficking in persons by age show that trafficking of children remains a great concern, because the shares of children among the total number of detected victims increased significantly in the period 2004–2014 (see figure 3). In addition, girls are victimized in trafficking in persons more often than boys.

Figure 3

Trends in the share of children among detected trafficking victims, 2004–2014

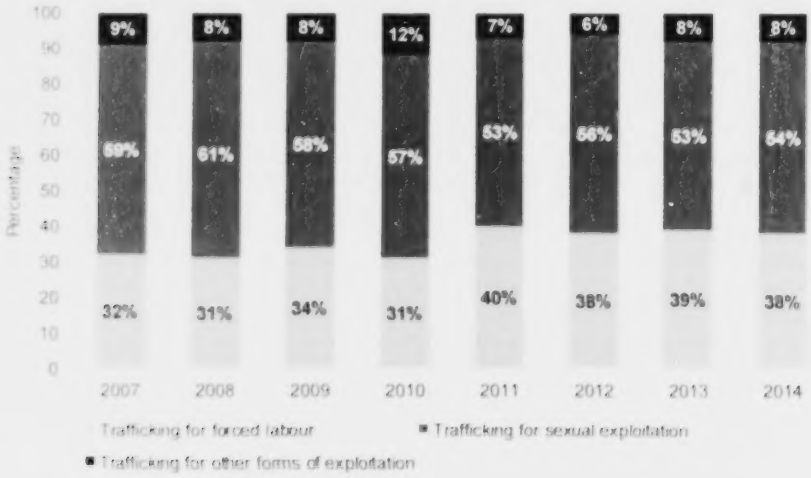


Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database

20. In relation to target 8.7, available data indicate that, among detected trafficking victims, the share trafficked for forced labour increased in the period 2007–2014 (see figure 4). During the same period, the share of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation decreased, while the levels of those trafficked for other purposes, including organ removal and forced marriage, remained largely unchanged.

Figure 4

Trends in the share of forms of exploitation among detected trafficking victims, 2007–2014

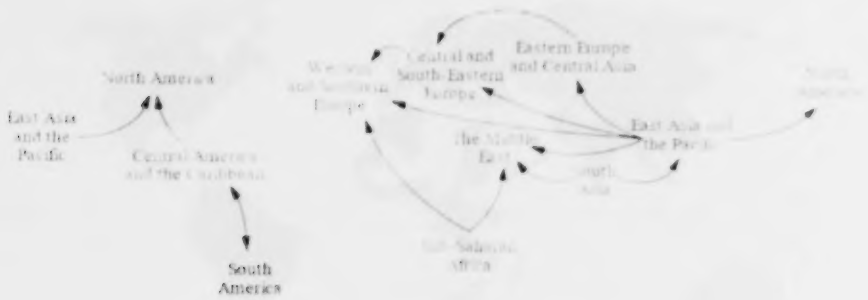


Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database

21. Available data over the last decade (see figure 5) have demonstrated a consistent relationship between trafficking in persons and poverty, in particular with regard to transregional trafficking flows. Many trafficking victims who end up in affluent countries in Europe, North America and the Middle East come from poorer countries from outside the region.

Figure 5

Main destination areas of transregional trafficking flows and their significant origins, 2012–2014



→ Transregional flows: detected victims in destination countries

Countries and territories not covered

Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

Note: The arrows represent flows of 5 per cent or more of the total victims detected in destination subregions. The global map is for illustrative purposes only and does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country or territory or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

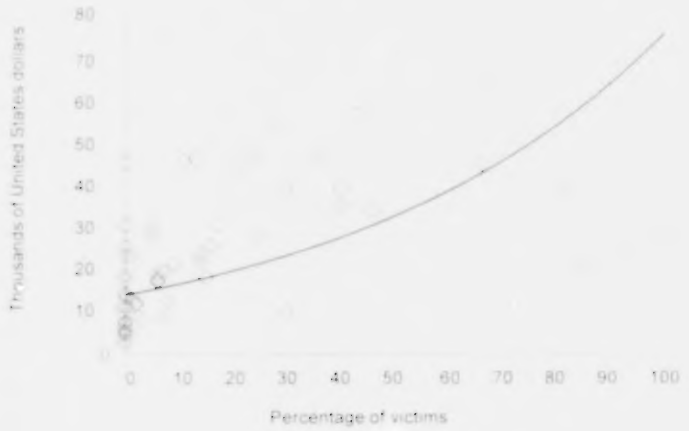
22. Data on country-level gross domestic product (see figure 6) confirm that the richer the country of destination, the larger the share of detected victims from distant origins.

See pp. 46–49, UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.V.10).

Figure 6

Correlation between the shares of victims trafficked more than 3,500 km from place of origin and the gross domestic product per capita of the destination country, 2014 (or most recent year available)

(United States dollars)



Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database World Bank.

Wildlife

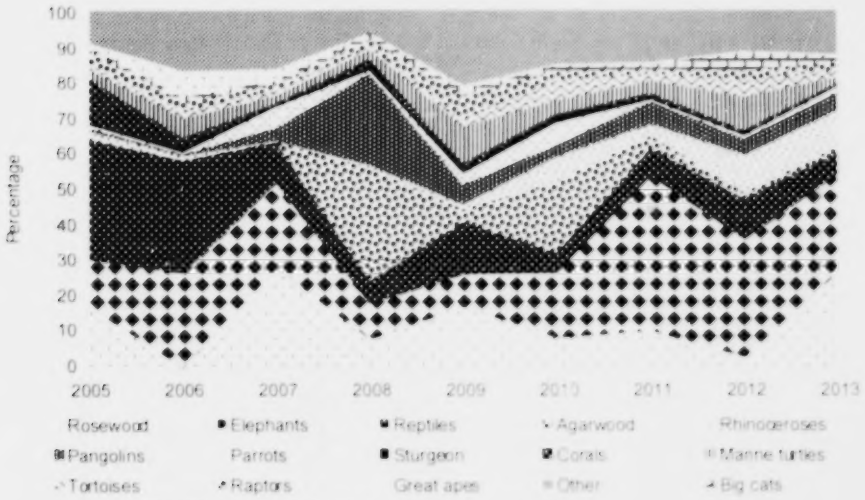
23. In order to monitor target 15.7 (Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products) of the Sustainable Development Goals, the global indicator has been designed to measure changes, using administrative data based on seizures. Global wildlife seizure data are based on data submitted by the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)[5] and collected by UNODC in the World Wildlife Seizures (World WISE) database.

24. Wildlife seizures can be misleading when considered in isolation, but when combined in great numbers they can provide an insight of many aspects of wildlife trafficking. Seizure data require careful interpretation because they are a mixed indicator, demonstrating both the presence of a problem and the initiative of the relevant authorities in addressing it. On their own, the data cannot be used to demonstrate the magnitude of the trafficking phenomenon.

25. Wildlife markets are apparently subject to considerable volatility (see figure 7). The valuated seizure data show the variability in the composition of the seizure record, which may or may not reflect underlying illicit flows. That value is often the result of a small number of very large seizures.

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 993, No. 14537.

Figure 7
Share of type of wildlife among total seizures (standard value), 2005–2013



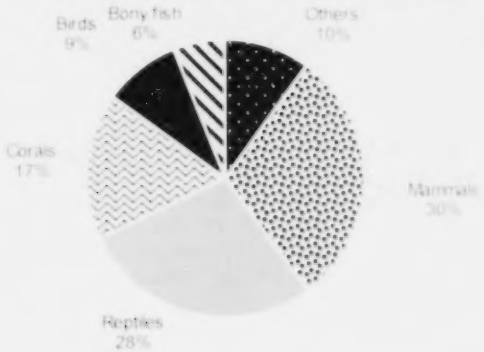
Source: UNODC World WISE database

Note: See *World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in Protected Species* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.XI.6).

26. The real value of seizure data comes not from what they reveal about the country making the seizure, but what they reveal about the rest of the trafficking chain. Most Convention-related wildlife seizures are made during transport, and the source and destination of the shipment are specified in the vast majority of recorded seizure incidents. Rich detail can be obtained concerning the routes and techniques used by the traffickers, and even which interdiction strategies are most successful. Triangulated with qualitative research, they can provide a key data source for understanding the mechanics of wildlife crime.

27. The analysis of the seizure data at global level illustrates the diversity of wildlife crime (see figure 8). Nearly 7,000 species have been seized, including mammals, reptiles, corals, birds and fish. No single species comprises more than 6 per cent of total seizure incidents. Virtually every country in the world plays a role, and no single country is identified as the source of more than 15 per cent of total seized shipments. Traffickers of some 80 nationalities have been identified, illustrating the fact that wildlife crime is truly a global issue.

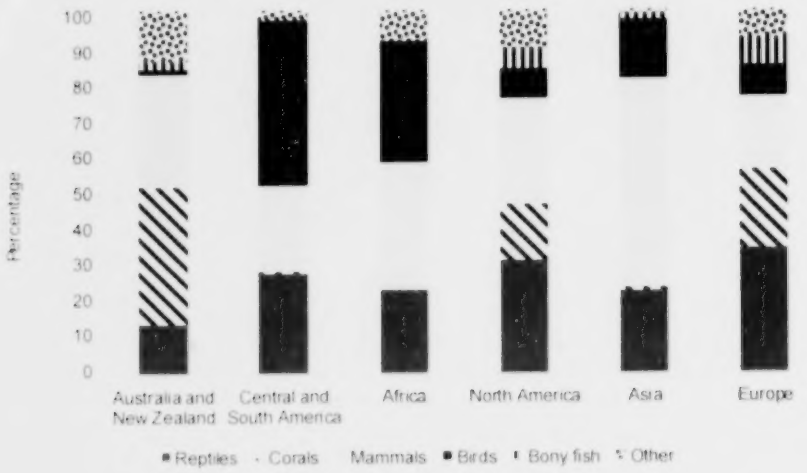
Figure 8
Share of all seizure incidents by taxonomic class, 1999–2015



Source: UNODC World WISE database

28. Whether as source or destination countries, or as part of the transit process, all regions of the world play a role in trafficking in contraband wildlife, although certain types of wildlife are strongly associated with each region. For example, birds are commonly linked with Central and South America; mammals with Africa and Asia; reptiles with Europe and North America; and corals with Oceania (see figure 9).

Figure 9
Distribution of seizure incidents by region and taxonomic class, 1999–2015



Source: UNODC World WISE database.

29. Wildlife poaching and consumption are strongly associated with the level of development. Poverty can provide incentives for poaching, but economic development can provide the means (e.g., road construction and forestry projects) to access pristine and wildlife-rich areas. It is likely that demands on wild areas increase as economic development progresses, both in range countries and destination markets.

B. Gender and crime

30. The framework to monitor efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals recognizes the need to have gender-sensitive indicators with data disaggregated by several variables, including sex, as well as indicators that specifically monitor the empowerment of women and gender equality. One such example is target 5.2. A review of the gender differences as they appear in relation to the indicators related to crime, which have been identified for targets 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere) and 16.2, is being undertaken, with a view to clarifying how women and men are affected by those crimes.

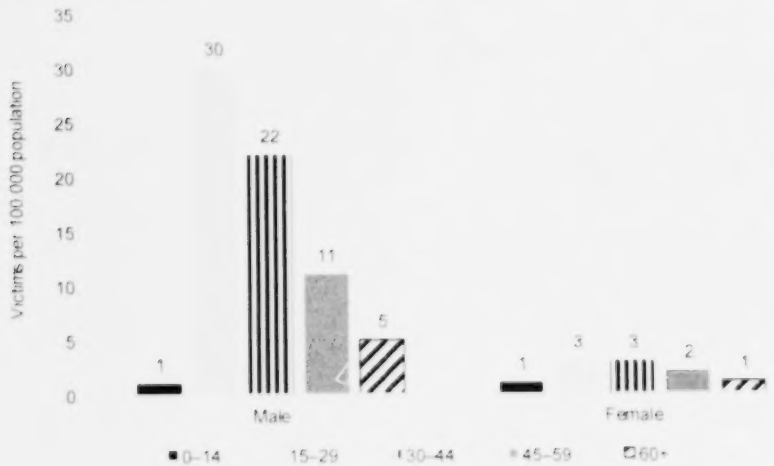
Homicide

31. Intentional homicide is a male-dominated crime. At the global level, around 75 per cent of all victims and 90 per cent of all perpetrators are male. In regions with very high homicide rates, such as the northern countries of Central America, 90 per cent of the homicide victims are male. For men, the risk of being involved in a homicide — either as a victim or a perpetrator — is concentrated at a young age. Young men are vulnerable to being murdered, often by other young men. While there are some regional differences, women are at a much lower risk of being killed overall. In regions with relatively low homicide rates, the percentage of female victims tends to be higher; however, even in those regions the majority of homicide victims are male.

32. At the global level, the homicide rate is highest among those aged 15–29 years (see figure 10), although there are regional variations. In the Americas, the risk of homicide among men is highest for young men aged 15–29; in Asia and Europe, however, men aged 30–44 suffer the highest risk. A similar pattern applies to women, although with a reduced homicide rate. At the global level, the largest percentage of homicide suspects, both overall and among male suspects, are males aged 19–24 (see figure 11).

Figure 10

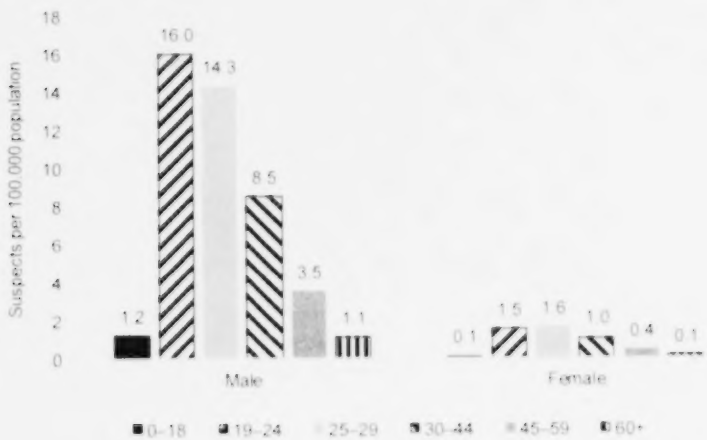
Victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age, 2015 (or most recent year available)



Source: UNODC homicide database.

Figure 11

Suspects of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age, 2015 (or most recent year available)



Source: UNODC homicide database.

Note: A "suspect" is defined here as any individual brought into formal contact with the police at the national level who is suspected of, or arrested and cautioned for, a criminal offence.

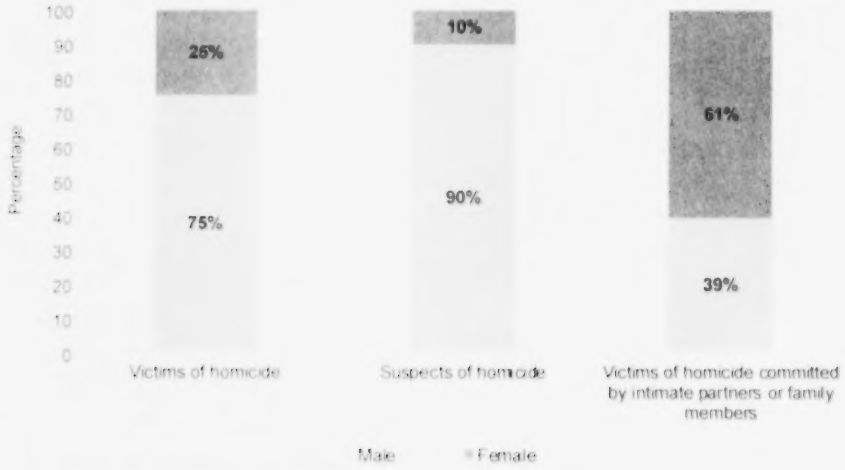
33. Differences in the nature and underlying drivers of homicide in different countries and regions around the world affect the sex and age profiles of victims and perpetrators of homicide. In particular, homicides that are related to gangs and

organized criminal groups, and those committed during robberies, are consistently higher in countries where the total homicide rate is also higher, which includes countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean, where the large majority of victims and perpetrators are young men.

34. In contrast, homicides committed by intimate partners and family members, which tend to affect a disproportionate share of female victims, do not demonstrate such strong regional variations. The gender differences are illustrated in figure 12, which shows that men are overrepresented as victims and perpetrators of homicide at the global level. However, women make up the majority of victims of homicide by intimate partners and family members.

Figure 12

Victims and suspects of all homicide, and victims of intimate partner and family member homicide at the global level, by sex, 2015



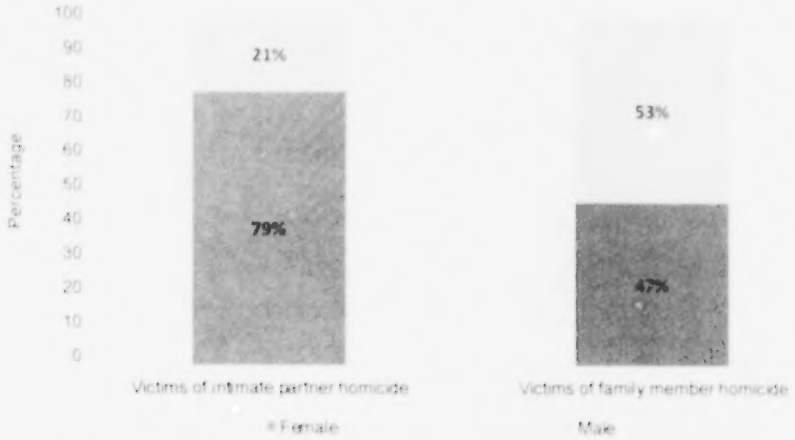
Source: UNODC homicide database.

35. The incidence of intimate partner and family member homicide has remained stable at the global level over the last decade, despite regional variations. With regard to intimate partner and family member homicide, victimization rates are consistently higher among women than among men, with some fluctuation at the regional level. In promising trends, victimization levels for both sexes are decreasing in some countries in Asia and Oceania. In spite of decreasing trends, the majority of female victims of homicide in Asia and Oceania, as well as in Europe, are killed by their intimate partners or family members. As such, the elimination of that type of homicide would substantially reduce the total number of female homicide victims.

36. According to European data, the profile of a victim of a homicide perpetrated by an intimate partner is different from that of a victim of a homicide perpetrated by a family member. When the perpetrator is a family member, the sex ratio is nearly 1:1, with men accounting for over half of the victims. On the other hand, when the perpetrator is an intimate partner, nearly 8 out of 10 victims are women (see figure 13).

Figure 13

Average percentage of victims of intimate partner and family member homicide, by sex, in 14 selected countries in Europe, 2015



Source: Economic Commission for Europe, Statistical Division Database, compiled from national official sources.

37. Available data suggest that in countries with very low (and decreasing) homicide rates (less than 1 per 100,000), female victims constitute an increasing share of total victims. In some of those countries, the share of male and female victims appears to be reaching parity.

38. In Europe, homicide rates are low and there is a downward trend. The pace of the decrease is noticeably faster for rates of male homicide than for rates of female homicide, and the historical gender gap is closing. If such trends continue, in years to come, there could be more female homicide victims than male in some countries.

39. While some countries with low homicide rates are approaching gender parity in terms of homicide victims, the same cannot be said about the offenders. The vast majority of suspects of intentional homicide continue to be men, despite the increasing gender parity of the victims.

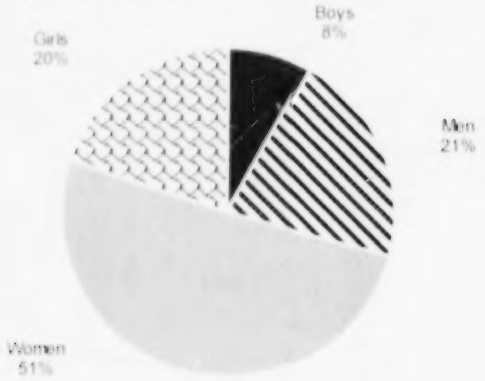
Trafficking in persons

40. In most parts of the world, the information on detected victims shows that trafficking in persons mostly affects women and girls. Women are mainly trafficked for sexual exploitation, but also for other forms of exploitation, including forced labour, sham or forced marriages, begging and domestic servitude.

41. According to the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database, 63,251 victims were detected in 106 countries and territories between 2012 and 2014. The majority of victims were women — adult women and girls — who comprised some 70 per cent of the total number of detected victims. Women have made up the majority of detected victims since UNODC started collecting data on trafficking in persons in 2003 (see figures 14 and 15).

Figure 14

Detected victims of trafficking in persons, by age and sex, 2014 (or most recent year available) (85 countries)

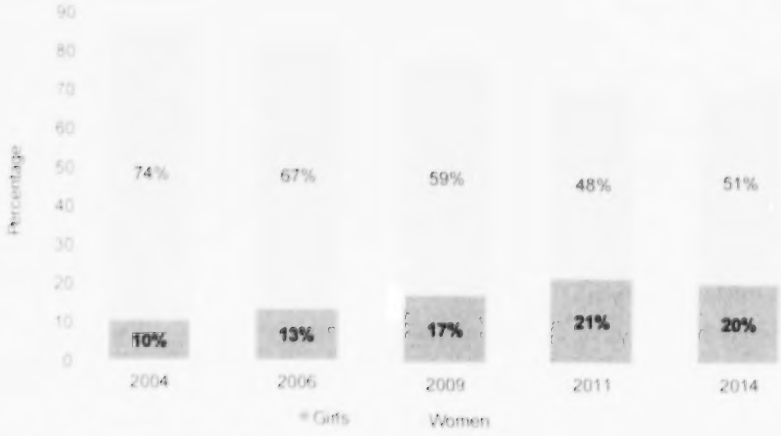


Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

Note: "Men" are defined as males aged 18 or older, "boys" are males aged 17 and under. "Women" are females aged 18 or older, "girls" are females aged 17 and under.

Figure 15

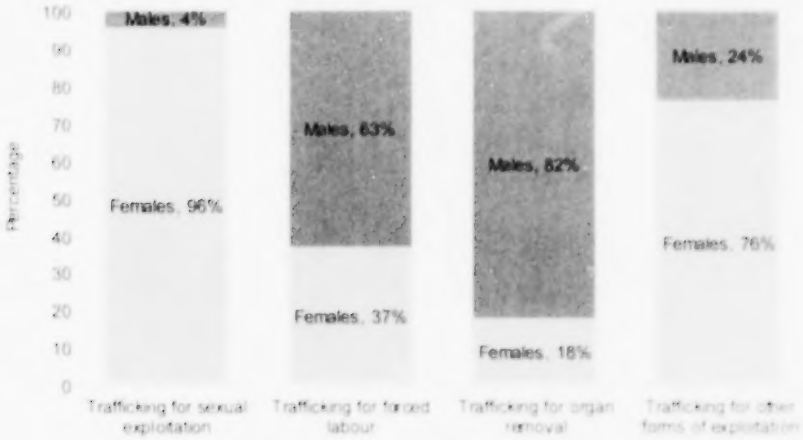
Trends in the shares of females (women and girls) among detected trafficking victims, selected years



Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

42. Approximately 23,000 victims trafficked for sexual exploitation were detected and reported between 2012 and 2014. The vast majority of them were women or girls. The few detected males trafficked for sexual exploitation are concentrated in Western and Southern Europe and the Americas (see figure 16). During the same period, females accounted for 37 per cent of detected victims trafficked for forced labour.

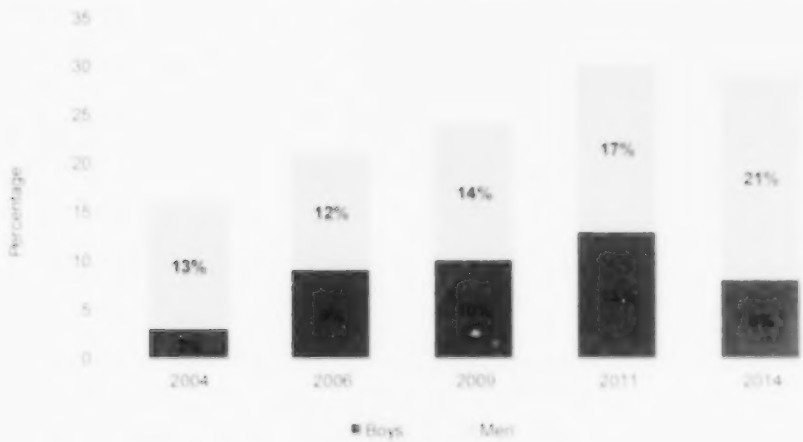
Figure 16
Share of detected victims of trafficking in persons, by sex and form of exploitation, 2014 (or most recent year available)



Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

43. Although women still comprise the majority of detected victims, the share of female victims decreased from 84 per cent in 2004 to 71 per cent in 2014. In contrast, the share of male victims increased over the same period, with men accounting for more than 1 in 5 detected trafficking victims between 2012 and 2014 (see figure 17).

Figure 17
Trends in the shares of males (men and boys) among detected trafficking victims, selected years



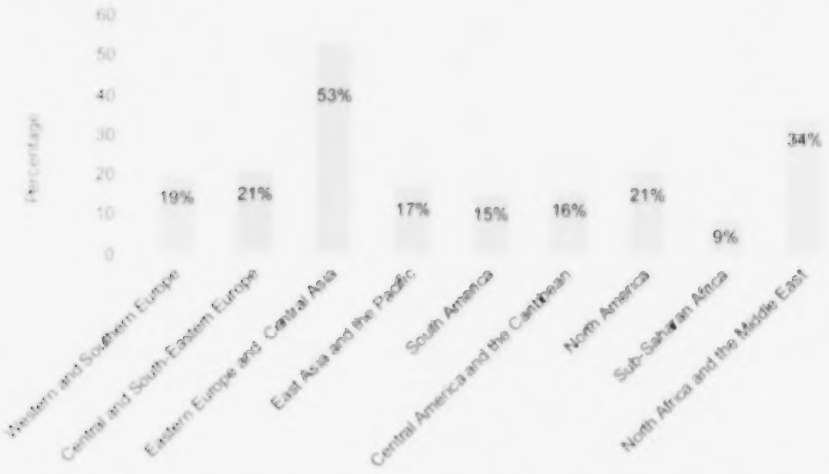
Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

44. Global averages mask marked regional differences in the profile of victims. In a few regions in the period 2012–2014, men represented the majority of detected victims (see figure 18). One such example was in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where the share of male victims exceeded 50 per cent, owing to widespread detections of men in Central Asia. Similarly, countries in the Middle East detected a proportion of men that was larger than the global average (approximately one third). That was consistent with the levels reported in the period 2010–2012. The high prevalence of male victims of trafficking in persons in those regions may be linked to the frequent

detections of trafficking for forced labour, which typically affects men more than women.

Figure 18

Shares of men among detected trafficking victims, by region, 2014 (or most recent year available)



Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

Note: Number of countries per region: Western and Southern Europe: 16; Central and South-Eastern Europe: 14; Eastern Europe and Central Asia: 8; East Asia and the Pacific: 8; South America: 9; Central America and the Caribbean: 10; North America: 3; Sub-Saharan Africa: 11; North Africa and the Middle East: 8.

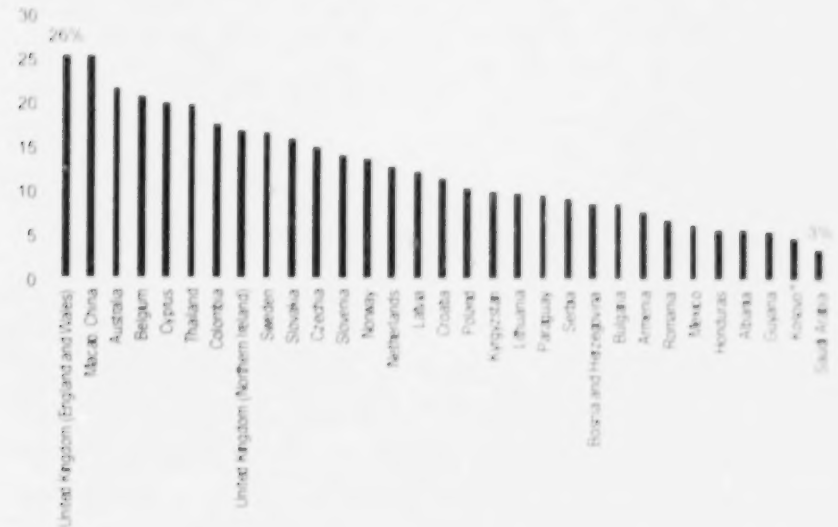
45. Sex-disaggregated data on trafficking in persons highlights the strong gender connotations of the crime. Most of the detected victims are women and girls. In addition, women make up a surprisingly high percentage of trafficking offenders when compared with other criminal activity. In 2014, more than one third of convicted traffickers across 66 countries were women, a far larger share than is commonly reported for other crimes. While the exact share of women prosecuted or convicted for human trafficking crimes has varied, the pattern has been evident since UNODC started to systematically collect data on trafficking in persons in 2003 (see figures 19 and 20).

Figure 19

Shares of persons convicted for trafficking in persons, by sex, 2014 (66 countries)

Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

Figure 20
Proportion of offenders convicted of all crimes who are women, selected countries, 2015



Source: United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems.

[*] All references to Kosovo in the present publication should be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

46. Homicide, which disproportionately affects women, is typically perpetrated by men. In contrast, while the majority of detected victims of trafficking in persons are women, a higher percentage of the offences are perpetrated by women. The data show that there may be a link between the profile of the victims and that of the offenders. In particular, UNODC research[9] has found a positive correlation between the share of girls detected as victims and the share of women convicted for trafficking in persons. Countries that detect a relatively high percentage of girl victims also have higher rates of women convicted of trafficking in persons. Conversely, in countries where there are fewer girls among the victims, fewer women are convicted of the crime, suggesting that female traffickers are more likely to participate in forms of trafficking related to the exploitation of women and girls.

47. While female traffickers are more likely to be involved in the trafficking of girls for sexual exploitation, their prominence, as well as the roles they play, may change depending on a combination of factors. For example, whether the country is predominantly a country of origin or destination can affect the likelihood of female involvement. Women may be frequently used as recruiters, in particular in cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation, because they may be more easily trusted by other women. Structural factors, such as the broader roles of women in society, may also have an impact, although that aspect requires further research.

48. The relatively high share of female perpetrators could also be the result of law enforcement activities. Women might play roles in the trafficking process that are more visible and therefore more easily detected by law enforcement.[10] In addition to recruitment, women might also be more likely to be assigned roles as guards, money collectors and/or receptionists in places where exploitation takes place. Those activities are often more exposed to the risks of detection and prosecution. In addition, the roles of women in the human trafficking process often seem to be those

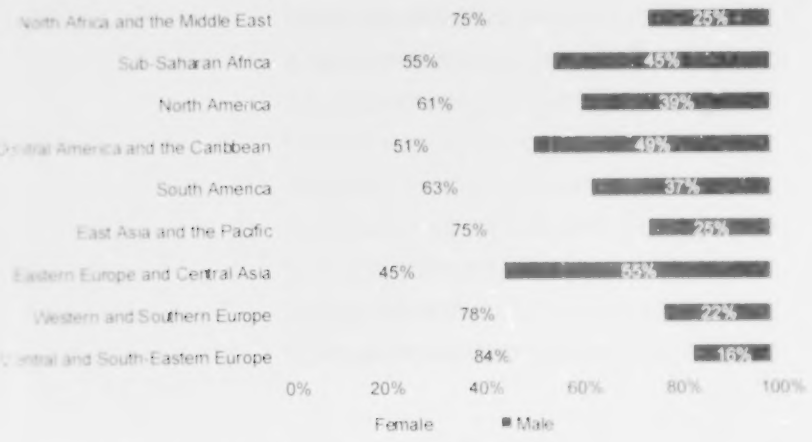
[9] *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.V.1), pp. 29–30.

[10] Ibid., p. 30.

this require frequent interaction with victims, which can increase the risk of detection for female offenders since many trafficking investigations rely heavily on victim testimony.

49. The wide regional differences found in prosecutions and convictions may reflect those different conditions. Trafficking in persons in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, for example, has strong gender-specific characteristics. In fact, it is the only subregion where women comprise a majority of those convicted of trafficking in persons (see figure 21), although Central America and the Caribbean also reports large shares of women among trafficking offenders. In other parts of the world, female offending rates are much lower.

Figure 21
Persons convicted of trafficking in persons, by sex and region, 2014



Source: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons database.

Note: Number of countries per region: Western and Southern Europe, 11; Central and South-Eastern Europe, 11; Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 5; East Asia and the Pacific, 6; South America, 7; Central America and the Caribbean, 5; North America, 2; Sub-Saharan Africa, 5; North Africa and the Middle East, 7.

C. Criminal justice system: access to justice

50. There are two global indicators that have been identified to monitor Sustainable Development Goal target 16.3 (Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all). Ensuring equal access to justice for all is one of the governing principles to promoting the rule of law, under which everyone, including the State itself, is accountable to law. Citizens may seek justice in relation to diverse issues, including criminal offences, administrative disputes or litigation on work-related matters.

51. Access to justice may be denied at an early stage if victims of crime do not report the experience to authorities. The crime reporting rate — that is, the share of victims who report a crime to the police or other law enforcement authorities — has been identified as an indicator for access to justice. Available data based on victimization surveys conducted in a number of countries indicate that the reporting rates for certain crimes (e.g., robbery) are typically lower in countries with higher prevalence rates of such crimes (see figure 22). Access to justice for citizens of such countries is therefore not functioning properly. There could be many reasons for not reporting the crime to the criminal justice authorities, including lack of trust, victimization, fear of stigma or issues related to accessibility.

Figure 22

Percentage of victims who reported robbery to the police, by level of prevalence, 2016 or latest year

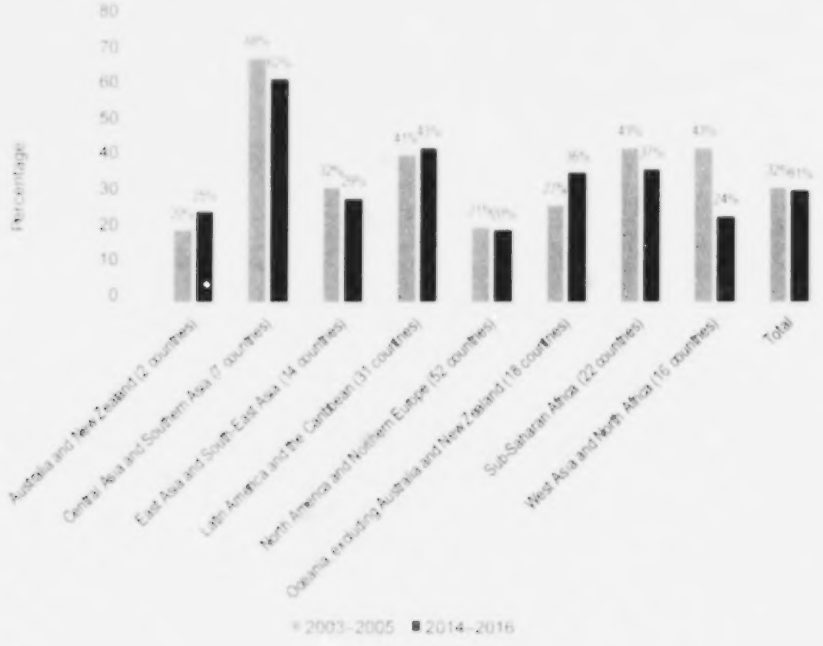
Source: United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems.

Note: Number of countries providing data is shown in parentheses. Estimates are unweighted averages of country data. For countries with more than one survey, the past 12 months per 100,000 used.

52. Another important element of access to justice and the rule of law is the treatment of persons suspected of crime by the criminal justice system. If pretrial detention is imposed, detainees suspected of or charged with a crime are entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. For that reason, the number and share of persons held in prison without any sentence has been identified as a Sustainable Development Goal indicator of access to justice. In that regard, fairness and efficiency of the criminal justice system are also indicators. At the global level, unsentenced detainees represent slightly over 30 per cent of the total prison population (see figure 23). In some regions, that share increased during the last decade, while there were significant decreases in others. Despite an overall decreasing trend at the global level, many developing regions still have a high share of unsentenced detainees. In Central and South Asia, unsentenced detainees continue to represent over 60 per cent of the prison population.

Figure 23

Unsentenced prisoners as percentage of total prisoners, 2003–2005 and 2012–2014 (3-year averages), by region



Source: United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems and the International Centre for Prison Studies.

III. Work towards better data

53. Reliable and comprehensive statistical data on crime and criminal justice are a prerequisite for evidence-based policies and the assessment and monitoring of the criminal justice response to crime. Developing common standards and norms therefore strengthens the role of empirical evidence in effective crime prevention and criminal justice administration. UNODC supports Member States by developing and promoting statistical standards and providing technical support, and it collects, analyses and disseminates statistical data on crime and criminal justice.

54. UNODC is the custodian of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS), which was endorsed in 2015 by the Statistical Commission and by the Economic and Social Council, upon the recommendation of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. In 2017, the Office expanded its activities to develop standards and tools for the implementation of ICCS and provide technical assistance to Member States. The use of the virtual platform on ICCS, an interactive online forum that serves as a tool for practitioners in Member States to exchange information and experiences on implementing ICCS in their own jurisdiction, grew to over 70 users from 50 countries. Materials and tools on ICCS are also disseminated on a dedicated website. Work continued on a manual on ICCS implementation, which is to be published in 2018.

55. In addition to materials and tools, UNODC also provided technical assistance and advice to dozens of countries currently in the process of adapting their national crime statistics to ICCS standards. A regional training course on the implementation of ICCS in the Asia-Pacific region was organized in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Statistics Korea and the

Thailand Institute of Justice. The course was held in Daejeon, Republic of Korea, in December 2017. National workshops on ICCS implementation — organized by UNODC and the UNODC-National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI) Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information on Governance, Victimization, Public Security and Justice — were held in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar and Uganda.

56. Regarding the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, UNODC is responsible for the collection of data on a number of indicators related to Goals 5, 8, 11, 15 and 16. UNODC now regularly collects data and metadata on intentional homicide, trafficking in persons and unsentenced detention for global monitoring. Where an established international methodology does not yet exist, UNODC has started methodological work on the development of feasible and reliable indicators. In that context, UNODC conducted a pilot phase of a data collection tool on firearm seizures to test concepts and data availability in relation to Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.2 (Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments). In parallel, it started a project to develop and test a methodologically sound approach to measure illicit financial flows, in view of indicator 16.4.1 (Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars)). An expert consultation was conducted in Vienna from 12 to 14 December 2017, in which national and international experts discussed a statistical framework for the measurement of illicit financial flows as well as on methodological approaches to produce relevant data.

57. Continuing its work on the measurement of bribery and corruption, the advisory task force of over 20 national experts from countries and institutions around the world met in Vienna, where it held its second meeting, to discuss the revised draft of a manual on corruption surveys. The manual is being developed by UNODC in collaboration with the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence and is to be published in 2018. In a parallel process, a report entitled *Corruption in Nigeria — Bribery: Public Experience and Response* was finalized and launched in Abuja in July 2017. The report summarizes the results of the first comprehensive survey on bribery and corruption in Nigeria, which is based on a representative sample of over 33,000 households across all 36 States of the country.

58. In 2017, UNODC also completed a major revision of the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems. The review was launched at the first global meeting of focal points for the Survey, which was held in Vienna from 9 to 11 May 2016, and attended by representatives of 43 countries and 11 international organizations. The review had become necessary in order to ensure that the Survey was fully consistent with the concepts, categories and definitions of ICCS. The review also served to respond to emerging data needs at the national and international levels, including data needs deriving from the Sustainable Development Goals under UNODC mandates in the areas of crime, violence, justice and the rule of law. The new data collection instrument will substantially improve the data collection on selected crimes and on the operation of criminal justice systems and will lead to an expanded dissemination of statistics on the data portal.

59. Regarding the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.2.2, UNODC has finalized a second test of the multiple system estimate. In September 2017, UNODC and the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children launched a national estimate of the number of victims of trafficking in persons in the Netherlands, broken down by sex, age, nationality (Dutch or non-Dutch) and form of exploitation. Produced using the multiple systems estimation methodology, the publication marks a big leap forward in trafficking research and will pave the way for further studies in other countries in the years to come. In 2017, UNODC has carried out three additional multiple systems estimations in other European countries. The results of those estimations will be included in the fourth *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, to be published in 2018.

60. A research brief updating the 2016 World Wildlife Crime Report was produced and presented at the sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee of CITES, held in Geneva from 27 November to 1 December 2017.

IV. Conclusion

61. The role of crime prevention and criminal justice is increasingly seen as part of development. That fact is clearly reflected in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, in which several targets relating to violence, the rule of law and the functioning of the criminal justice system were established. In many cases, the cause and impact of crime is related to development. Examples include the connection between income inequality and homicide rates, the trafficking in persons flow from poor to rich countries and the relationship between poverty and wildlife poaching. Indicators on crime trends can provide valuable information to help assess these developments and pinpoint challenges, and can also detect positive developments and policies related to them. In several countries, homicide rates have decreased during recent years. Exploring the policies behind those decreases could assist policymakers in developing efficient strategies for violence reduction.

62. Gender analysis can provide further insight into the crime situations in different parts of the world. Crime often affects women and men differently. While the majority of homicide victims are men, most victims killed by an intimate partner are women. In both cases the offenders are usually men. In some affluent countries, where the overall homicide rate is low, the gap between female and male homicide rates starts to shrink, owing mainly to the decrease of male homicide rates. Prevention efforts should therefore address both male and female victimization. As offenders, young men are overrepresented, in particular in countries with high homicide rates. From a policymaking perspective, it would be important to explore what makes young men vulnerable to being involved in violence both as perpetrators and victims.

63. While homicide is a male-driven crime, trafficking in persons seems to have a major impact on women. Women and girls comprise the majority of detected human trafficking victims in most countries, and they also are convicted as offenders of trafficking in persons more often than they are for other crimes. However, based on the known victims, women and men are trafficked for different forms of exploitation. While sexual exploitation victimizes women almost exclusively, men and boys are the main group trafficked for forced labour and organ removal.

64. The Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power,[7] paragraph 4, reads:

> Victims should be treated with compassion and respect for their dignity. They are entitled to access to the mechanisms of justice and to prompt redress, as provided for by national legislation, for the harm that they have suffered.

Victims of crime should be able to trust that they have access to justice through the established mechanisms. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. Victims may not report their victimization for many reasons, including a lack of trust in the criminal justice system; fear of retaliation, revictimization or improper treatment; shame and stigma; or difficulty identifying as a victim. These factors should be carefully analysed in order to change the policies that hinder victims from reporting their victimization.

65. High levels of non-reporting by victims are one reflection of the failure of a country to secure access to justice for all. However, even those who are suspected of committing a crime should have access to justice. High numbers of incarcerated persons who remain unsentenced indicate problems with the fairness and efficiency of the criminal justice system, and also indicate that the principle of access to justice cannot be ensured.

[7] General Assembly resolution 40/34, annex.

66. Administrative data reflected in crime statistics or seizures can seldom if ever be used to assess the magnitude of the crime problem in a country. However, that fact should not lead to underestimating their value in providing information on criminal activity, offenders, victims and the functioning of the criminal justice system. When carefully analysed with an understanding of the limitations, administrative records can provide a wealth of information for the monitoring the crime trends.